Discarded coaches

981. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that bogies, coaches which are discarded elsewhere in the country are deployed in Southern Railway;

(b) the number of new coaches which have been deployed in Andhra Pradesh; and

(c) the details of total trains operating in Andhra Pradesh and their age?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Railway Coaches are not deployed on State/Province basis. Coaches are distributed and owned by Zonal Railways whose territory may extend over many provinces.

Increasing the number of ticket counters in Andhra Pradesh

982. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether more ticket counters will be opened in different parts of Andhra Pradesh by the Railways;

(b) whether it is a fact that even now it takes a long time to buy a reserved ticket at Secunderabad and Hyderabad railway stations;

(c) whether senior officers have studied this problem;

(d) what steps will be taken to reduce crowd and queues at railway stations in Andhra Pradesh; and

(e) the steps proposed to open more computerised ticket counters in different parts of various cities in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The average time taken to buy a reserved ticket at

Secunderabad and Hyderabad Railway Station is about 30 minutes. Senior officers of the railway are always concerned with the volume of rush at the reservation counters to take remedial measures. In peak season, additional reservation counters are opened to ensure the convenience of the passengers at all important locations.

(e) In the State of Andhra Pradesh two computerised reservation centres have recently been commissioned at Kakinada Port and Dronachalam. These facilities have also been sanctioned for another 8 locations *viz.* Nagarsol, Jangaon, Dornakal, Mehdipatnam, Duvvada, Sullurpetta, Sattenpalli and Vikarabad.

Advanced weapons and equipments for RPF

†983. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to equip the personnel of Railway Protection Force with most advanced weapons in view of the recent incidents of dacoities, loot and killings in trains;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the estimated amount to be spent on the said work and by when it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. It is proposed to equip Railway Protection Force with appropriate weapons like AK-47 and 5.56 milimetre (mm) Rifles (called INSAS) by phasing out the out-dated-wapons like the Bolt Action Rifles.

(b) For the Year 2003-2004, 1,000 numbers of 5.56 milimetre (mm) Rifles (called INSAS) and 2,000 numbers of 7.62 milimetre (mm) Self Loding Rifles were procured. Earlier to this also, in view of the increasing duties of Railway Protection Force in trains, light and compact weapons like 9mm Carbines and 9mm Pistols have been provided replacing the old Bolt Action Rifles.

For the year 2004-2005, 1,000 numbers of 5.56 milimetre (mm) INSAS Rifles and 500 numbers of 9mm Carbines are being procured.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.